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IN THE CLAIMS:

1-35. Cancelled.

36. (Previously presented) A communications system comprising:
a first network comprising a plurality of first network subscriber units and a first network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the first network subscriber units;
a second network geographically at least partly overlapping the first network and comprising a plurality of second network subscriber units and a second network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the second network subscriber units; and
a dedicated connection between the first network sink node unit and a second network unit capable of communication in the second network, whereby a first network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another second network unit.

37. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 36, wherein wireless communication in the first network is independent of wireless communication in the second network.

38. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 37, wherein wireless communication in the first network is in a different frequency band from wireless communication in the second network.

39. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 38, wherein the first network comprises a plurality of first network sink node units with which the first network subscriber units are capable of wireless communication.

40. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 39, comprising a plurality of dedicated connections, each dedicated connection being between a respective first network sink node unit and a respective second network unit whereby a first network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another second network unit.

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41 (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 40, comprising:

a third network geographically overlapping the second network and comprising a plurality of third network subscriber units and a third network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the primary third network unit; and

a dedicated connection between a second network sink node unit and a third network unit capable of communication in the third network, whereby a second network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another third network unit.

42 (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 41, wherein wireless communication in the first network and in the second network is independent of wireless communication in the third network.

43. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 42, wherein wireless communication in the first network and in the second network is in a different frequency band from wireless communication in the third network.

44. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 43, wherein the second network comprises a plurality of second network sink node units with which the second network subscriber units are capable of wireless communication.

45. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 44, comprising a plurality of a dedicated connections, each dedicated connection being between a respective second network sink node unit and a respective third network unit whereby a second network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another third network unit.

46. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 45, wherein the said communication is data communication.

47. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 46,

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wherein the said communication is packet data communication.

48. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 47, wherein the said communication said communication uses an internet protocol.

49. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 48, wherein the said communication in the first network is radio communication.

50. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 49, wherein the said communication in the second network is radio communication.

51. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 50, wherein the said communication in the third network is radio communication.

52. (Previously presented) A communications unit for operation in a communications system including a first network comprising a plurality of first network subscriber units; and a second network geographically at least partly overlapping the first network and comprising a plurality of second network subscriber units and a second network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the second network subscriber units; the communications unit being operable as a first network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the first network subscriber units and having a dedicated connection to a second network unit capable of communication in the second network, whereby a first network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another second network unit.

53. (Previously presented) A method for providing a communication path in a communications system comprising: a first network comprising a plurality of first network subscriber units and a first network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the first network subscriber units; and a second network geographically at least partly overlapping the first network and comprising a plurality of second network subscriber units and a second network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the second network subscriber units; the method comprising providing a dedicated connection between the first network sink node unit

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and a second network unit capable of communication in the second network, whereby a first network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another second network unit.

54. (Previously presented) A communications system comprising:
a first network comprising a first sink node and a plurality of first communication terminals capable of wireless communication with the first sink node;
a second network level geographically at least partly overlapping the first network and comprising a second sink node and a plurality of second communication terminals capable of wireless communication with the second sink node; and
the first sink node being further capable of operation as a second communication terminal for providing the first communication terminals with communications access to the second network.

55. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 54, wherein wireless communication in the first network is independent of wireless communication in the second network.

56. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 55, wherein wireless communication in the first network is in a different frequency band from wireless communication in the second network.

57. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 56, wherein the first network comprises a plurality of first network sink node units with which the first communication terminals are capable of wireless communication.

58. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 57, comprising a plurality of dedicated connections, each dedicated connection being between a respective first network sink node unit and a respective second network unit whereby a first network communication terminal may be provided with a communications access to the second network.

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59. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 58, comprising:

a third network geographically at least overlapping the second network and comprising a plurality of third network communication terminals and a third network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the primary third network unit; and

a dedicated connection between a second network sink node unit and a third network unit capable of communication in the third network, whereby a second network communication terminal may be provided with the communications access to the third network.

60. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 59, wherein wireless communication in the first network and in the second network is independent of wireless communication in the third network.

61. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 60, wherein wireless communication in the first network and in the second network is in a different frequency band from wireless communication in the third network.

62. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 61, wherein the second network comprises a plurality of second network sink node units with which the second network communication terminals are capable of wireless communication.

63. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 62 as dependent directly or indirectly on claim 24, comprising a plurality of a dedicated connections, each dedicated connection being between a respective second network sink node unit and a respective third network whereby a second network communication terminal may be provided with a communications access to the third network.

64. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 63, wherein the said communication is data communication.

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65. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 64, wherein the said communication is packet data communication.

66. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 65, wherein the said communication uses an internet protocol.

67. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 66, wherein the said communication in the first network is radio communication.

68. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 67, wherein the said communication in the second network is radio communication.

69. (Previously presented) A communications system as claimed in claim 33, wherein the said communication in the third network is radio communication.

70. (Currently amended) A communications unit for operation in a communication system including a first network comprising a plurality of first communication terminals; a second network geographically at least partly overlapping the first network and comprising a second sink node and a plurality of second communication terminals capable of wireless communication with the second sink node; the communications unit being operable as a first sink node capable of wireless communication with the first communication terminals and of operation as a second communication terminal for providing the first communication terminals with communications access to the second network.

71. (New) A communications unit as claimed in claim 35, the wireless communication in the first network being independent of wireless communication in the second network.

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72. (New) A communications unit as claimed in claim 36, the wireless communication in the first network being in a different frequency band from wireless communication in the second network.

73. (New) A communications unit as claimed in ~~any of~~ claims 37, the first network comprising a plurality of first network sink node units with which the first network subscriber units are capable of wireless communication.

74. (New) A communications unit as claimed in claim 38, the communications system comprising a plurality of a dedicated connections, each dedicated connection being between a respective first network sink node unit and a respective second network unit whereby a first network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another second network unit.

75. (New) A communications unit as claimed in ~~any of~~ claims 39, the communications system comprising:

a third network geographically overlapping the second network and comprising a plurality of third network subscriber units and a third network sink node unit capable of wireless communication with the primary third network unit; and

a dedicated connection between a second network sink node unit and a third network unit capable of communication in the third network, whereby a second network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another third network unit.

76. (New) A communications unit as claimed in claim 40, the wireless communication in the first network and in the second network being independent of wireless communication in the third network.

77. (New) A communications unit as claimed in claim 41, the wireless communication in the first network and in the second network being in a different frequency band from wireless communication in the third network.

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78. (New) A communications unit as claimed in any of claims 42, the second network comprising a plurality of second network sink node units with which the second network subscriber units are capable of wireless communication.

79. (New) A communications unit as claimed in claim 43 as dependent directly or indirectly on claim 40, the communications system comprising a plurality of a dedicated connections, each dedicated connection being between a respective second network sink node unit and a respective third network unit whereby a second network subscriber unit may be provided with a communication path to another third network unit.

80. (New) A communications unit as claimed ~~in any~~ of claims 44, the said communication being data communication.

81. (New) A communications unit as claimed in claim 45, the said communication being packet data communication.

82. (New) A communications unit as claimed ~~in any~~ of claims 46, the said communication using an internet protocol.

83. (New) A communications unit as claimed ~~in any~~ of claims 47, the said communication in the first network being radio communication.

84. (New) A communications unit as claimed ~~in any of~~ claims 48, the said communication in the second network being radio communication.

85. (New) A communications unit as claimed ~~in any~~ of claims 49 as dependent directly or indirectly on claim 40, the said communication in the third network being radio communication.

86. (New) A method for operating a communications unit in a communications system including a first network comprising a plurality of first communication terminals; a second network geographically at least partly overlapping the first network and comprising a

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second sink node and a plurality of second communication terminals capable of wireless communication with the second sink node; the method comprising operating the communications unit as a first sink node capable of wireless communication with the first communication terminals and operating the communications unit as a second communication terminal for providing the first communication terminals with communications access to the second network.

87. (New) A processor configured to execute a computer program at a communications unit, the communications unit operating in a communications system including a first network comprising a plurality of first communication terminals; a second network geographically at least partly overlapping the first network and comprising a second sink node and a plurality of second communication terminals capable of wireless communication with the second sink node; the computer program being configured to cause the communication unit to operate as a first sink node capable of wireless communication with the first communication terminals and as a second communication terminal for providing the first communication terminals with communications access to the second network.

88. (New) A controller for a communications unit operating in a communications system including a first network comprising a plurality of first communication terminals; a second network geographically at least partly overlapping the first network and comprising a second sink node and a plurality of second communication terminals capable of wireless communication with the second sink node; the controller being configured to cause the communication unit to operate as a first sink node capable of wireless communication with the first communication terminals and as a second communication terminal for providing the first communication terminals with communications access to the second network.